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HOMEMAKERS! CHAT

Monday, May 27, 1940.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "TALKING TUPKEY." Information from the Bureaus of Animal Industry and Mone Economics, Agricultural Marketing Service, and Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Publication available, leaflet on "Poultry Cooking."

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Decoration Day seems to usher in the season for community get-togethers of one kind and another, - church suppers, school picnics, organization outings, and large family reunions. And the favorite food that will be served this year in many of these gatherings will surprise you, - for it's likely to be <u>turkey</u>! We've long since passed the day when turkey was a special treat on Thanksgiving and Christmas. It's a year around meat now, and this spring it happens that supplies are unusually large, prices are favorable, and the turkey meat is good eating. There is a larger than usual supply of rather large birds- 18 to 25 pound toms.

The Department of Agriculture says that on May 1 we had about 2-1/2 times as much turkey as we had last year. Because of this you'll readily understand why hotels, restaurants, dining-cars, and other public eating places will feature this delicious meat on their menus in the next few weeks. And you may be interested to know that men in the Army and the Navy, and in the CCC camps, will have their full share of the big surplus of turkey, too. To say nothing of patients and nurses in hospitals, and other persons in institutions of one kind and another.

There's a tip in this turkey situation for the homemaker who has a large family, or who expects to have a large week-end household from time to time during the summer. If she has a big enough roasting pan-- and a big enough oven-- to take one of the 18 or 20 pound toms, she can give the family a treat without apologies to her food budget. For the larger the bird, the more economical buy it is.

Poultry specialists tell us that the big turkeys have about 75 percent edible ment-- compared with about 64 percent on a large fat chicken. The ton turkeys run heavier than the hen turkeys, and also lose less when they are dressed for the oven. And the nutritionists say that turkey meat is equal in food value to any other poultry.

The best thing about turkey meat from the thrifty housewife's standpoint, perhaps, is that it's good either hot or cold. Once roasted, you can serve it hot or cold sliced or use the meat in all the dishes you generally make with chicken,—in salad, in sandwiches, in sauce a la King, in pie, shortcake, curry, aspic, croquettes, and last but not least—hash. If you have a good cold refrigerator, you can keep cooked turkey meat several days.

And if turkey is good at the individual family table, the same is true when the homemaker is one of a committee planning a Decoration Day or Fourth of July community picnic, or a lodge supper, or a church social. Practically everybody likes turkey. The large turkeys are not only more economical for a big group because they have the most meat in proportion to bone and waste, and so serve more people than an equal poundage in small-sized birds. They are labor savers when it comes to dressing and cooking them, because fewer are needed.

Now about choosing a first rate turkey. Quality turkeys have well-floshed breasts and thighs, well-rounded bodies, a good coating of fat, few or no skin tlemishes, and few pinfeathers. You may find government graded turkeys in your market. They are called U.S. Prime, U.S. Choice, and U.S. Commercial, and rank in that order. Either of the first two grades will make excellent fare. A crooked breastbone reduces the grade of a turkey otherwise meeting all grade requirements, but makes no difference in the flavor of the meat. It does, however, make the turkey harder to carve, and so in buying several of these big turkeys for a community gathering, it is well to pick those with straight breast bones that are adapted to rapid serving.



Even if your dealer does not display turkeys on his counter just now, he can get them for you, for there are plenty of them at wholesale, at relatively reasonable prices. You may see some frozen turkeys that are full drawn and ready-to-cook. First thaw these slowly and then cook promptly.

As to cooking, the Bureau of Home Economics says that a large young tom turkey is cooked like any other young bird, that is, slowly in an uncovered pan with a rack and no water added. A turkey weighing 18 to 25 pounds needs very moderate oven heat and a long cooking period. Cook at 250 to 275 degrees Fahrenheit for 6 to 8 hours. By the end of this cooking time the turkey meat should be tender and juicy.

With the oven as slow as this, turning the bird every hour for even cooking is sufficient. To keep from breaking the skin in turning, lift the bird at the head and foot with clean folded cloths to protect the hands. Baste with the pan drippings or with melted butter or other fat. To see whether the turkey is done, run a steel skewer or a cooking fork carefully into the thickest part of the breast and into the thigh next to the breast. If the meat is tender and the juice does not show a red tinge, the bird is done.

The kind of stuffing you use is a matter of taste. If you'll write to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and ask for the leaflet on "Poultry Cooking", you'll find recipes in it for several different kinds of stuffings, as well as numerous suggestions for dishes in which your leftover turkey can be used like chicken.

